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Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claims 1-9, 12, 13, 16-32, 35 and 38. Please amend Claim 14. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions of the claims in the application:

Claim Listing

1-9. (Canceled)

1 ~~10~~ (Previously presented) A method of maintaining or inducing hair color in a mammal, said method comprising inhibiting p75 nerve growth factor receptor-mediated apoptosis in epidermal melanocytes wherein the apoptosis is inhibited by contacting the melanocytes after injury to the skin or hair follicles, with an effective amount of a neurotrophin or a biologically active fragment thereof that binds to the p75 nerve growth factor receptor expressed on melanocytes.

11-13. (Canceled)

2 ~~14~~ (Currently Amended) A method of inducing or maintaining skin color in a vertebrate comprising inhibiting p75 nerve growth factor receptor-mediated apoptosis in epidermal melanocytes wherein apoptosis is inhibited by contacting the melanocytes, after injury to the skin or hair follicles, with an effective amount of a neurotrophin or a biologically active fragment thereof that binds to the p75 nerve growth factor receptor expressed on melanocytes.

15-32. (Canceled)

3 ~~35~~ (Previously Presented) The method of Claim ~~10~~¹, wherein the neurotrophin is nerve growth factor, neurotrophin-3, neurotrophin 4/5 or brain-derived neurotrophic factor.

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4 ~~34~~. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim ~~10~~¹ wherein the biologically active fragment is a peptide comprising amino acid sequence lysine-glycine-alanine.

35. (Canceled)

5 ~~36~~. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim ~~14~~², wherein the neurotrophin is nerve growth factor, neurotrophin-3, neurotrophin 4/5 or brain-derived neurotrophic factor.

6 ~~37~~. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim ~~14~~² wherein the biologically active fragment is a peptide comprising amino acid sequence lysine-glycine-alanine.

38. (Canceled)